

financial liabilities may be assumed by one person for another, but moral liabilities cannot be. No one can pay a moral debt, or meet a moral obligation, but the party that incurs it. In morals each man must meet his own obligation and pay his own debt. The mortgage which our past sins have upon us can be lifted only by ourselves.

A fifth form of explanation is known as the governmental theory, and was constructed in the seventeenth century by Grotius, a great Dutch jurist. As the theories just examined seemed to leave no room for forgiveness, he maintained that Christ was not actually punished for the sins of men, but merely endured suffering which God, as a merciful ruler, could accept in the place of punishment. Instead of regarding his death as necessary to satisfy divine justice, he regards the satisfaction afforded by it as a free and gracious arrangement, adapted to display the righteousness of God and vindicate the dignity of his administration. In this view the voluntary sufferings of Christ were designed to meet the demands of justice as a sort of punitive example, and impress men with such respect for law and authority as to render forgiveness safe. On the exercise of faith in what Jesus suffered, they are delivered from punishment by divine grace.

This theory eliminates the notion of penal substitution, or vicarious satisfaction; but, though with certain modifications it has been widely accepted,